

A N
E N Q U I R Y
I N T O T H E
N A T U R E
O F T H E
H U M A N S O U L,

I T S

Origin, Properties, and Faculties;

Considered both in regard to itself, and its
Union with the Body.

I N W H I C H

Several received Opinions are confuted con-
cerning both.

Causa latet, vis est notissima.

OVID.

L O N D O N,

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M D C C L.



An ENQUIRY into the
N A T U R E
OF THE
H U M A N S O U L,
In regard to Itself, and
Its UNION with the BODY.

AM I D S T the numberless Enquiries Mankind have been busied about, that of the Nature of the Soul of Man, the thinking and reasoning Principle within us, either considered in itself, or in a State of Union with the Body, seems neglected or not pursued with Success; and though one might well expect, in these inquisitive Times at least, the Subject should become familiar, yet we find the Accounts we have of it, either from ancient or modern Writers, are mostly dark and abstruse, or indeed oftentimes quite inconsistent.

'Tis Pity, I confess, so little of the Philosophy of the *Indians*, *Arabians*, and *Persians*, in their early Times, has reached our Days; for, as far as appears to us, the higher we endeavour to trace them, the better Opinion we must be inclined to entertain of them, and their Notions, particularly that of all things being produced out of Water and Chaos, and

their Account of the Creation, as being an Emanation from the Deity: of which more hereafter. Which Expressions may perhaps point out to us, the true Origin of us, and the whole World of Spirits and Matter. After these, the *Greeks* had most of their Learning from the *Egyptians* and *Orientals*; and what they borrowed from them, they improved and brought to a considerable Degree of Perfection. In their Country ^a *Orpheus*, for that there was such a Man is undenialble; he, I say, enriched with their learned Treasures, taught the Immortality of the Soul, and the Happiness of good Men in a future State; and after him *Thales* did the same. These great Geniuses carried their Views to an higher Pitch, than their Successors were able to maintain them at afterwards. The Reason of which perhaps might be their being aw'd and discouraged by the blind Prejudices of the Vulgar. Though *Anaxagoras*, we must confess, was an Instance of the contrary. He even pushed some Notions further, and is express for a divine and intelligent Mind presiding over the Chaos, and governing all Nature. This is understood by the Doctrine of the *Ionics*, but it seems it was dangerous for those of superior Learning and Talents, to endeavour to convince Mankind by Reason and Force of Argument. For this very *Anaxagoras*, we find, was thrown into Prison, and with great Difficulty

^a See Dr. Burnet's *Archæologia Philosophica*.

set at Liberty And afterwards, we know, *Socrates*, the wisest of Men, was actually put to Death for his Wisdom. He was far from being contumacious; but his peaceable inoffensive Behaviour could not save him from the prevalency of Idolatry and Superstition. He was an Advocate for the Soul's Immortality ; but human Nature, frail and weak in itself, and unsupported, as it was, by extraordinary Assistance, could not then make head against the common Stream. Whereas when these Things were declared to Mankind by Revelation from Heaven, with what a superior and uncontrollable Spirit were the Apostles carried on to the Work of their Ministry, still prevailing in defiance of all Opposition, though backed with the most violent Persecutions and cruel Tortures ? But to return.

We know little of the true Meaning of ^b *Pythagoras*: he taught every thing in Numbers and abstracted Notions, too mysterious to be well understood by those that came after him. The Doctrine of Transmigration might have had something of the Appearance of Reason in it, if it had served any moral Purpose ; but as it was made only physical, and to be brought about by a natural Necessity, it was apparently no more than an idle Dream or Invention, calculated for no End or Benefit to Mankind, or any Part of the Creation.

^b *Burnet.*

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The Doctrine of the Soul of the World, as held by the *Stoicks*, must only tend to the Destruction of good Morals. This Sect indeed turned their Instructions to the Precepts of Life and good Behaviour, under the various Conditions and Incidents thereof, more than the rest ; but these lost all their Force and Efficacy by their absurd Tenets in relation to the Structure of the Universe. As they made the Soul to be a Part of the Deity, it is no Wonder that they excluded a Governor and Rewarder from it ; but that they shd not allow this Part of the Deity itself to have any particular Sensation after this Life, was most absurd to imagine.

The old Philosophers, as, I think, we have it pretty plainly made out of late, had a Double Doctrine, one for the Vulgar, and another only for their admitted Disciples ; and perhaps they might sometimes, when they judged it proper, steer in a middle Course, thinking it necessary for the Good of Mankind, and the Government of the World, in their civil Capacity and Relation to deceive the Bulk of them into an Opinion of a future State of Retribution, which either they themselves did not believe, or concerning which they fluctuated in great Uncertainties.

'Twas a strange Instance of the Frailty, or wrong Bias of human Reason, that inclined Men to desert the noble Precepts of *Plato*, for

s Mr. Warburton.

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those of so inferior a kind of *Aristotle*. The former reasoned upon the Nature and Condition of the Soul and moral Subjects with Dignity, though, it must be confessed, a little too abstractedly. 'Tis wonderful, when Christianity prevailed in the World, and the Professors of it came at all acquainted with the different Doctrines of these two Men, that they did not immediately reject those of the *Peripatetic*, and embrace the other; at least, if they thought one of them needful as an Instructor. St. *Paul* himself has very justly represented the Philosophy that then prevailed, which was *Aristotle's*; who had debased all the other's noble Conceptions, and introduced little but Jargon and Impiety into the Place of them; denying the Immortality of the Soul, excluding Providence from the Care of Mankind, and consequently banishing out of the World all Sense of Devotion. There is little of Instruction in his Natural Philosophy, but a great deal of Pedantry: a Parcel of unmeaning Words put together in a conceited, superstitious Manner, make up the greatest Part of it. And as to his Astronomy, any one, that had understood any thing of the Advances even at that Time made in that Science, must for that very Reason, one would have thought, have entertained it with Contempt. Notwithstanding these Things now appear to be real Facts; from his Time down to almost ours, his Philosophy, not contrived or calculated for Knowledge, but Contention;

tention ; and his Name, were revered, and his Doctrines or Tenets prevailed, to the Reproach of Reason and Revelation.

As to the Moderns, though the greatest Advances and Discoveries have been made in true Knowledge ; I am afraid, these have mistaken the Case, as to the Subject we are now upon, I mean the Essence and Nature of our own Beings. They are apt to represent the Soul and Body in such a Manner, as to render them incompatible, and utterly incapable of any Communication, in any Degree whatsoever. They state the Spirituality of the Soul so high, and every thing belonging to Matter so gross, that, by just Deductions from their own Principles, they will confute themselves ; and, besides, their Opinions must appear impossible, by what we all find every Day transacted in our own Frame.

As for Instance, one of the best of our ^a Writers has some Years ago maintained, that the Particles of Matter in any System, and disposed in their Texture and Motions in any imaginable Variety of them, can never be conceived to be Instruments of Thought or Perception, no, not in the curious Structure of the human Body. To which the Answer is ready: We do not indeed conceive the Manner of it, as we do not sufficiently understand the Nature of Matter or Spirit, either separately, or as combined together in our Frame. But then, on the other Hand, we can as little compre-

^a Dr. Clarke.

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hend how the different Arrangement, or Motions of the minute Particles of Matter in our System, as subsisting among themselves, can possibly regulate Thought, or any way affect it, as, we find by Experience, these, or the Want of a due Texture or Motion in them often does. So that one Head shall be clearer, or more capable of masterly Reason, and upon more extensive Views than another ; and this, as the Doctor's Advocates, more especially from their own Principles, must allow, solely upon the Account of its Mechanism and Construction, or from more refined or better adapted Fluids, with which it is favoured. If this be the Case, 'tis plain, our want of adequate Conceptions of these Things, or the Possibility of them, makes the Argument by no means conclusive.

According to the Notions of these Gentlemen, the Simplicity of the Nature of Spirit, such as the human Soul, entirely free from all compounding Parts whatsoever, will not admit of Differences in the same Species in point of Understanding. And as these suppose it is immediately formed by the divine Hand, and infused at the same Time into the Body; according to this Account, it must be made perfect in its Kind, as being the direct Workmanship of the all-perfect Being. Therefore, according to their own Principles, there can be no Difference in human Understandings, except what arises from its Connection with the Body. As to those that hold a ready Communication

cation in Nature between Soul and Body, they will not find any Difficulty in allowing, that the Variety in the Understandings of Men happens from the Difference in the Organs, by which the fine Parts are fitted up for the Service of Man.

As to what is said, that Matter, however rarefied into its minutest Parts, or how differently so ever modified, is equally distant from all Spirit, with the most gross and inactive Parts, as being after all no more than mere Matter ; if we bring the Case to the Test of impartial Observation, and unerring Experience, we shall find, and be satisfied beyond all possibility of Doubt, that Matter, when refined and wrought up into a proper System, is vastly more adapted for the Use and Society of the Soul, or spiritual Part in all Communications with each other ; and is in that State as different from a Portion of Matter, wrought into no System at all, as any two Things in the Universe of created Beings can be : indeed one would think every Moment's Experience were abundantly sufficient to evince this. If this be so, and 'tis impossible to distinguish in the joint Operations of Soul and Body, how far one is engaged, or how little the other ; we should not be so positive as to the Abilities of the one, or the utter Insufficiency of the other. 'Tis only He that can set Bounds to the Sea and Earth, and can say to either, *Hitherto shalt thou come, and no further,* that can see and determine the Bounds

of the component Parts of the little World of the human Kind, in their several Natures and Operations.

I might oppose another Genius of the finest Head and most upright Heart treating on this Subject, to that Assertion of the Doctor's we have been considering; who supposes God can, if He pleases, annex Thought to a proper System of Matter: so that though a great Number of learned Men may have gone into a contrary Notion, yet we can produce one ^c consummate great Man, among others, and the best of Friends to Christianity and Revelation, that is express to this Purpose. But it should be the Reason of the Thing, not the Authority of a Patron, tho' never so great, that ought to weigh and determine the Matter in Question; and therefore before we give into it, we should well consider and examine, whether this reasoning of the Doctor's will be absolutely decisive, as he supposes, or carries the evident Marks of Demonstration; though he seems very sure, there is nothing in Matter but Solidity and Extension, divided into such Particles as he describes, and striking upon, or moving about each other in their fortuitous Encounters. This, I take, to be begging the Question, and there may be a great deal more in it than he seemed to be aware of, as I have endeavoured a little to make appear, and hope to evince more fully.

^c Mr. *Locke*.

Gravitation of Matter seems by the best Examination we can pass upon it, as inseparable from it, as any Property he admits. The Attractions of the small Particles of every Parcel of Matter, whereby Adhesion, and indeed Motion, by different Degrees and Ways, is occasioned, as well as by Repulsion; the former Discoveries, as well as the more surprizing ones of late Years, which at present I just mention, of what is called Electricity, and the various Appearances which result from ^f Menstruums, that commonly act in a very different Way from the general Laws of Attractions, not forgetting the wonderful Effects of the Load-stone: These all proclaim, there is something very different in Matter, from what the Doctor allows in his Definition of it. Most of these Discoveries were little expected in former Ages, that have surprized the present one, and many more may yet no doubt be concealed in the Womb of Time, with which Posterity may be favoured, and a Principle of Sensation may possibly be exerted in a Manner we at present may little look for, and they that come after us, may get better Acquaintance with it.

'Tis not the general received Opinion, no more than a great Name or Authority, we are to depend upon, nor are we qualified to pronounce in general, what is contained in the inmost Secrets of Nature. The wisest know little or nothing of the Substance or Make of material Beings; nor should we implicitly submit

^f See Boerhaave's Chemistry.

to those, who are forward to advance Positions relating to them, but had better be content to wait till we have made the best Trials we can think of. All bare Assertions prove nothing at all, but only the slight Foundations on which they are built. We have no inspired Notices of these Things, and must therefore be ruled by Facts and Observations; and let Things ever speak for themselves, unless we will set ourselves at the Top of the Creation, and lay a Claim to absolute Infallibility. The Truth is, we know little, extremely little in comparison of what we are ignorant of; and it is only by many wary and repeated Experiments, that we at last can make any flow Advances.

We are at least as ignorant of the Nature of our Minds, as of Bodies in which they inhabit; nor does it lye under the Compass of our Understandings to judge of either, till we are well informed, and plainly see what is transacted in the one, and diligently consult our Thoughts by due Reflection, on what passes in the other, and there too at last, we shall be still more throughly convinced, that there is a thick Veil of Obscurity thrown over both.

There are some things, we must at the same Time allow, we have sufficient Acquaintance with from every Day's Experience, and some of them too of a Kind, that make it appear, there is more in Matter, as connected in our own Make, than the Doctor or his Followers can admit of. To make this out more particu-

larly, I shall proceed to shew, that a System of Matter, rightly constructed in the human Fa-brick, is necessary to preserve and regulate Thought as well as Health, as long as Mind and Body remain united. This is plain, from the Case of Distempers that happen to the Body, that incapacitate us for thinking at all, as well as moving; though the Possibility of their Agency in these Cases by the Ministry of Na-ture, be ever so unconceivable; indeed if we allowed no more to Matter than the Doctor does, we must own what he says upon that Concession to be Demonstration. But on the contrary, if we abide by convincing Facts, we shall find it quite otherwise. As for Instance again, the self-same Humours, when lodged in the extreme Parts of the Body, and giving only Pain or Lameness there, when by any Accident they happen to be tranlated to the Head, these very Humours may give Madness or Stupidity; and if again derived from thence, and those of a benign and congenial Kind at length reassume their Place and Office, the Understanding, before darkened and eclipsed, opens again, and the Person returns to his right Mind. Such Changes Persons that have been much conversant with Diseases, must be sensible of. Now will any one believe, that so strict a natural Tye between Matter in the human Body and the Mind can be preserved, and such Effects be produced by no better Qualifications, than Solidity and Extension, and Particles

Particles rolling over one another ? We find the Mind steered in a good measure by the Condition, and Regulation of our material Frame, and a Man's Complexion will give a Tincture to his Thoughts, and a Bias to his Inclinations. Can the finer Parts of Matter, that have nothing but Impenetrability to recommend them, put into some Motion or other as it happens ; Can these, I say, be of any Stead, when joined to an human Spirit, to assist its Understanding and reasoning Powers, and to give Sails to the Passions and Affections ? Can a few of these, when by any Obstructions arrested in their proper Motions, at once extinguish these bright Faculties we enjoy ? Sure there must be something more in Matter, when duly modified, to assist it in the Discharge of these noble Offices, and without the orderly Frame of which all these Abilities fail and utterly vanish. If we should suppose the material Part capable, when out of Course, of obstructing and defeating the Operations of the Mind, but not of assisting them when in their right Order, then it must be given us only to destroy the proper Use of the Mind, under some Circumstances, as often as they occur. How absurd, as well as injurious to our Maker, must such an Imagination be, let every Man judge. A Block or a Stone would make as good Companions for the Heaven-born Principle within us, as any these Gentlemen have assigned and equip'd us withal. There must be something much fitter

fitter than these in our material Part, to minister to the Exigencies and Uses of this excellent Creature. To help us to rise, as upon Wings of Contemplation, towards Heaven, and take in suitable, though incomplete Ideas of the Creator himself, to survey the Beauties of the Creation, and to enquire, though by dilatory Steps, into the secret Recesses of it ; to serve to conduct our Steps by well-weighed Rules of Prudence in the difficult Paths of Life, and to enable us to adapt every thing about us in the most convenient Manner to our own Necessities and Occasions ; as well as to consult, if we think fit, our future true Interest and Happiness : Sure nothing can be more incongruous, than to suppose these sterl Particles any way adapted to such Ministraions, and for such conspicuous Ends and Purposes ; which yet, we see, they must be, if their orderly Frame be necessary to secure these great Effects.

But whatever there is further that plainly and powerfully affists, when the Organs are rightly disposed, I am not much concerned whether it be called a Substance or Mode, or any other Title Writers may please themselves with ; not being fond of applying Names, where I have no distinct Ideas.

I would be far from magnifying the Powers of Matter beyond the Truth of the Case, with a Design to detract from the Nature and Dignity of the Soul, or in Prejudice to the Doctrine of the Immortality of it. But on the contrary,

contrary, to set that, as well as the Resurrection of the Body, in a more advantageous Light, as I shall endeavour to make appear ; and should hope to establish them in some measure on their true Basis, knowing that building Matters of Weight upon weak Foundations, or mistaken or inconsistent Principles is so far from doing Service in the Case, that to Men of ordinary Penetration, such Proofs are prejudicial to the Argument, and render it more incapable of getting our Assent ; and therefore am desirous to remove as far as I can, by my weak Attempt, such Errors of Consequence as have obtained footing in the World ; and believe this a great one of that kind, that attributes no better Qualities to Matter than what I have been speaking of, as existing in the Universe, and particularly in the human Body.

As to Matter in general, some have strenuously asserted its Incapacity of Motion, till acted upon by some intelligent Agent or Spirit ; and to this Purpose have put it under a^b Mathematical Examen. I ask, what kind of Matter it is these Gentlemen mean ? Is it such a kind only, as I have been opposing ? If so, every one must believe that Sort, I confess, incapable of self Motion ; but, as I believe, there is no such Matter in being, so defective and inert, as these Gentlemen make it ; and if we take along with us all the Properties of Matter before recited, or whatever other

^b Mr. B—t—r on the human Soul.

Powers there may be assembled in it, I imagine, there are many Reasons to conclude the Contrary, and to persuade us, that there are probably in it Principles and Springs of spontaneous Motion, as we find it revealing itself to us in the Works of Creation.

'Tis now well known, that there are extremely fine and agile Parts in this Matter: these subtle Parts are, we find, actually busy, and act as, we formerly thought, none but intelligent Agents could do, by attracting some Particles, and rejecting others from a nearer Contact and Union. Had any in former Time insisted on these Truths, they would have been reckoned impudent Venders of lying Impossibilities, for their Pains; though there is no one that makes Enquiries into these Things, that hesitates about them. That these Attractions and Repulses must be Principles of intestine Motion, is very obvious to believe; especially when returned with various Degrees of Elasticity, arising likewise from the Make and Nature of the encountering Particle. Fluids are the Stage where these manifestly appear to the naked Eye, and shew to what a Degree of Violence Acids and Alkalies, for Instance, ferment and expand themselves when first mixed together. Chemical Authors abound with Trials of the same sort, both in Fluids and Solids, which are curious and entertaining enough to read; though not always safe, without particular Caution, when made out in the

experimental Way, by reason of the great Force with which they act, and sometimes fly to Pieces. The familiar one of Powder or Filings of Steel, when made into a Paste, with Flower of Sulphur and a little Water, and the Heat and Explosion made by that Mixture, are well known. These Efforts, by constant Observation, appear to be mechanically produced from natural Bodies ; and where they are entirely left to Nature itself, Art being wholly laid aside, they must certainly arise out of their Make, Being, and Motion.

If any one will confidently affirm these Things are done by the Agency of Spirit upon Matter ; then it will lie upon them to give some Account how it happens to affect the different Portions of Matter in so different Manners, according to their several Compositions or Textures, as they differ in themselves, and not in one constant Tenor of Motion. If this supposed Spirit attracts some, and disperses others, according to the Quality of the material Subject it works upon ; 'tis strange, every one must confess, that a Being, so pure and active in itself, and so abstracted from all Matter, as they make it, should be for ever tied down to the gross Parts of it, so as to be steered and determined in its Motions by every particular kind of it ; and that different Sizes and Surfaces, or whatever else there is in it, according to the Maintainers of such Tenets as we now oppose, that these should never suffer it to start from

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appropriated Laws of Matter, nor shake off one of those numerous Fetters. This therefore must be too inconsistent at first Sight to be admitted, and we are obliged to conclude, there is something naturally inherent to Matter, besides what our parsimonious Writers of this kind have allowed it.

We want a better acquaintance with the late Discoveries of the new kind of Electricity I mentioned, and its surprizing Appearances. However, the Curious have found, from Multitudes of Trials upon the rub'd Tube, or Sphere, that there is an inconceivable subtile Matter, in the Form of Fire, that has a constant Spring of Activity in it, and that easily pervades many, if not most of the grosser Bodies, and where it meets with a fitting Reception, it accedes more plentifully, as in the Electrical Engine; and there, by Attrition of this Glassy Substance, with the Help of a warm Hand, to a proper Degree of intestine Motion occasioned thereby, does not only give Warmth, but these busy Particles kindle into Sparks and actual Flame; and the commonly prevailing Opinion of late Years has been found to be a Mistake, *viz.* that Heat and Fire were nothing else but the finest Parts of the Body itself that is thus excited, and put into a brisk Motion, or violent Agitation; whereas we now find, and are convinced, that these fine Parts did not of themselves arise to this Rapidity of Motion; but that it was these almost infinitely fine

fine Particles, that by their ceaseless and incredible Activity gave us these sensible Amusements. One would hope, that great Light might be struck into the secret Springs and Movements of Nature by this happy and most remarkable Discovery, as well as good Uses struck out of it for the Benefit of Mankind. There have been some few Instances of Help in Paralytic Complaints, from the Use of the Electrifying Machine, that have not been printed, and that are well known. Particularly of one of about Eighty, that received an absolute Cure of an Arm that was entirely useless. Indeed she was but newly seized, but had felt Pains in that Part to a considerable Degree for many Years before. This Recovery was effected at one Trial only, at *Ludlow* in *Shropshire*.

As to this subtle Flame, thus much may be observed from what is now said ; that we cannot conceive what Occasion there was for these Principles, so active and amazingly fine in their Structure, and so easily excited into Motion, by different Attractions and Repulsions, or in some way or other ; nor of what necessary Use this subtle Fluid should be, in ministering to the Offices of Nature, if there must be, after all, a strictly immaterial Spirit to supply its Exigencies, and assist to put Matter into Motion. The Chemists were aware of subtle Particles, before these Experiments came under ocular Inspection by the Help of Tube or Spheroid ; and were sensible, not only of their

Existence, but of the Necessity of them likewise, to enable natural Causes and Effects to obtain and take Place, as they constantly do, in the curious Works of the Creation. Their manifold Experience in their Researches necessarily led them into this Conclusion ; but to what End this æthereal Substance was made, and how a Being, altogether immaterial, should close with this, rather than Matter of grosser Alloy, will be difficult, I think, even for the metaphysical Heads themselves, upon their Premises to discover.

But let us come to the Scriptural Account. *Moses*, in the Beginning of his History of the Creation, speaks of the *Waters* that were just created ; and that this was the Form the new Production of Matter appeared in : which Account the ancientest of prophane Writers remarkably concur in, and say the very same Thing. These stood fairest to hear the Truth of the Matter, as being nearest the first Times. Now, it is certain, Water is not a collective Mass, void of Motion ; so far from it, that Motion is essentially necessary to give it that Form ; and when there is no longer kept up a certain Degree of the Motion of the Particles it consists of, which is the Case in a certain known Degree of cold Weather ; it alters that liquid Body, and assumes that of Ice. The strict Enquiries that have been made into this Matter, and the Experiments made concerning it with the Assistance of Thermometers, as well as

common

common Observation, confirm this to be so beyond all Contradiction. Hence, it plainly appears, the first Matter of which this World of ours was created, consisting of Waters, was actually in a considerable Motion of its Parts among themselves, as soon as created, and before the Spirit of God is said to move upon the Face of the Waters. How then shall we be able to reconcile Scripture, supported by best Antiquity, with our mathematical Gentlemen, who have taken so much Pains to prove the contrary ? In the mean Time, I hope they will not despise these Testimonies.

As to the Studies of Nature, we know how fallacious most Hypotheses, and Assertions founded on them, have ever been, and we should be cautious of introducing them without plain and pertinent Proofs, and fairly reject them when they do not coincide with the Attestations of Facts. If we have all the Evidence our Senses, or Enquiries can give us, of Nature's acting upon established Laws of its own, we have no Reason to fly to imagined Aids, and of a kind wholly foreign, to explain its Conduct ; nor rely upon pretended Demonstrations, that are built besides the true Basis of Nature, upon visionary Schemes only, and without any particular Knowledge of the Subject under Consideration. There seems no need of supernatural Efforts, to enable it to keep and regulate its usual Course. 'Tis replete, and abounding with Stores of its own for every Occasion, as we

we find it created and variously modelled, and fitted out for every Use, in every Part of it, and in all its conspiring Systems; and is not made up of such dead Materials, as the Case has been represented; nor can we look over all its rich Stores so easily as we may imagine. In so copious a Field, when with our best Skill and Application we have made what Progress we can, in the experimental Way, which is the only sure one, we should be content to leave to Posterity many Discoveries; and, where Things are obscure, suspend our own Judgments. Whilst we and the rest of Mankind are pursuing our Enquiries, we must still remember, that when we are able, by much Labour, to gain a very few Points, even then the more we know, the more Doubts arise, and our Line is too short to arrive at the Bottom of Things. The most familiar Object we every Day converse with, has a thousand Things concealed in its Nature we are Strangers to; and we had better be modest and own our Ignorance, than positively to determine, where we have none, or insufficient Proofs, and which therefore, we may venture to say, will never stand the Test, when they come to be thoroughly examined. Many are the Errors that have crept into the learned World, for want of observing this Rule, and many more Discoveries would have taken up their Place, if Men would but have the Patience to wait for the evident Characteristics of genuine Truth; and, I think,

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this very Notion of the Incapacity of Matter for its own Work, is an Instance of the former kind; but that it should not be able to stir one Step towards it, is most improbable, as well as injurious to the adorable Creator.

Another Error, as I take it, that has been maintained of late Years, and principally in our Country; is that there is a common Sensory in the Brain, though not now affirmed to be lodged in the *Glandula Pinealis*, to which all the Intelligence of Sensation, from all distant Parts of the Body, arrives. The Soul, as to its contemplative Employments, we are all sensible, is in the Head; we readily grant too, this is the Seat of Reflection as well as of Memory. But as to the Sense of Feeling in the other Parts of the Body, it seems to be seated in those Parts themselves, and the Organs and Fluids that belong to them, as long as the several Parts are united by proper Bands, and visited and enlivened by their circulating Fluids. Sensation must seem as difficult to be conveyed from the remote Parts to the Head, as for a Traveller in a dark Night to find his exact Way, through innumerable Turnings and Windings, to his Journey's End, without seeing one Step of the Road he is in. That in the Structure of our *Microcosm* there are no direct Channels of Conveyance found to the Head from all the extreme Parts, is most certain. Besides, the Motion of the nervousⁱ Fluid is too slow, as Anatomists

ⁱ Keill's Anatomy.

find,

find, to be the Instrument of this Sensation, by its immediate Ascent to the Head, where the Soul has been supposed solely to reside; or to bear any Proportion to the Quickness of that Sense we are blessed withal, which we find instantaneous upon the first Touch of any thing that occurs, tho' but to the bare Surface of the Body. This cannot then be the Medium of so quick a Perception, by ascending to the Head, and bringing its Intelligence thither in any visible, nor indeed imaginary, Ways, I might say, can it reach that Post. What then can be the Means, or the Instrument of this Communication, but the Soul in the Blood and Fluids, with which it is intimately united, and diffused through the whole Habit, for the great and necessary Purposes of Life? so true is that which was affirmed so long ago by *Moses*, *the Blood is the Life*; that is, of the living Creature to which it belongs. This mingles with the Soul in all its Circulations, which is ready on the Spot to take Notice of every Incident that arrives, and ever so slightly affects our Frame, even in the external Parts, or Out-Guards of the Body. As to the motive Faculty, there is no Power of exerting that, as we find by Experience, when there is a Ligature made upon the Artery that is inserted into each Muscle, so as that no Blood can enter into it; and the Muscle so intercepted is as un-serviceable, as if it were actually cut asunder, till the Ligature is relaxed or taken off. The Con-

Construction of each Limb, Nerve, and Muscle is so exquisitely well adapted to the Use of Motion, as sufficiently to instruct us in the Manner of its Performance, whilst the Principle of Life I mentioned, is constantly passing those Parts in its daily Rounds, and no longer ; which is therefore quite necessary to this End ; but, at the same Time, the Frame and Structure of these so well adapted Instruments forbid us to give into the Opinion of an immediate Influx of Spirits from the Members to the Head in Sensation, or indeed from the Head to the Members at the Time of Motion.

And furthermore, there are Insects, and other Creatures too of a superior Rank to these, that when their Heads are fairly taken off shew evident Signs of Perception, and still retain a Power of spontaneous Motion. A Fly without his Head will fly away, and a Wasp after the same Loss, and sometimes on the Morrow, will, when disturbed, as some have found to their Cost, shew a Resentment, so far as to sting the Person that inadvertently lays his Hand on it. A Frog will jump away, and avoid any Puncture or Offence after his Brains are taken out, or mashed together in the Skull ; and those that can make these Trials, take it that he has not lost his Sight in this miserable Condition, by his avoiding, as they say, any Thing that is thrust towards him, though it does not actually reach him. A Pigeon will live some time without the Brain, and search

its Aliment ^k; and we have lately had some Account of an Insect called a Polype, that when cut in several Pieces, every separate Piece, after this Operation, will grow into an entire Animal of the same Species. The same is known to be the Case of some Fish of the Star kind; therefore we see plainly, that neither the Source of Sensation in any remote Part of the Body, nor the Springs and Principles of Motion, nor indeed sometimes of Life it self, reside in the Head, nor are derived by any Channel of Communication to, or from the Brain; and some Men have been known to live till most of the Brain has been consumed ^l by means of a corroding Cancer, as has appeared by Dissection; and ^m live Children have been born without any Brain. Another erroneous Opinion, as I take it, is this, that the Soul of Man was not made at the Time of the general Creation, when all Things besides were created; but that it then received its first Being at the Time when it was infused into the Embryo in the Womb. The Question is not concerning its being properly a Soul before, for that Assertion I would not be thought to maintain; but whether the Principles, out of which it is formed, were not existing before, and whether these did not in a natural Way assume the Properties of an human Soul. The *Lutherans*, if I am not mistaken, have held that it is *ex traduce*, or from

^k *Philosoph. Transf.* N^o. 226. ^l *Phil. Transf.* 277. ^m *Phil. Transf.* 226.

the Parents; and, I confess, I think the Opinion probable, because, among other Reasons, I cannot well suppose, that the all-pure Creator would busy himself, as I may speak with Reverence, on purpose to create a Soul for what received its material Formation from the most impure Mixtures ; and thus : by a particular Agency, and no less than a new Creation, remarkably minister to those Actions of Men, that must be sure at the same Time to fall under his Displeasure ; or that he would ever create a Being of such noble Capacities, only to immerse it into a Body, that will be altogether incapable of exerting the Actions of rational Life, from some Errors in the natural Conformation of it; which is allowed to be the Case of Idiots. Nor, upon Supposition only of divine Prescience of future Events, would it be thought very reasonable to imagine, that the infinite wise Being should be every Day creating Souls in abundance for infant Bodies, that are to die in that immature State ; and consequently not capable in a moral Respect of Rewards or Punishments in a future one, as never having thought or committed any thing that had the Relation of Good or Evil. The Scriptures tell us, *the Son shall not bear the Iniquities of the Father*, and when these are visited on them, all these sacred Writings agree, it is on such Children only, as walk in their wicked Fathers Steps. And to suppose the Spirits of Innocents are purposely created only to go to

the same Place as these Parents do, would be very horrid ; though there have been some such Notions broached, I know, by some, but, I hope, never seriously believed by any. Now if these Things to common Reason seem impossible to be so ; the Soul must consequently take its Origin from some other Cause ; and what can the Conclusion from this be, but that the Soul of the Child is derived from the Soul of the Parents, as well as the Materials of the Body from their Bodies ?

As strange as this may appear at first Sight, this Doctrine was taught by ⁿ *Tertullian*, one of the Fathers in the first Ages of Christianity ; and many in the Western Churches followed him in maintaining the same ; and St. *Austin* himself favoured this Opinion, or at least hesitated, as ⁿ *Bellarmino* tells us, to his dying Day. Such Testimonies, 'tis to be hoped, will take off any Odium that might be thrown upon this Opinion or Persuasion, seeing some of the most discerning, as well as the most learned in the purest Times of the Christian World, inclined to it.

Those that have examined into the Methods of Nature in regard to the first Dawnings of Life in Animals, have discovered, especially in some extraordinary Cases, that the gross Substance in the male Semen ^o does not reach the Ovum that is impregnated by it ; but this is effected only by the more spirituous subtle

ⁿ *Baronii Metaphysica.*

^o See *Phil. Trans.* No. 237.

Parts,

Parts, whose Energy is such as to be capable, probably by the Help of the Circulation of the Blood, of extending to the remote Seat, where the Principles of Life are kindled. An Animal so low in the Rank of Creatures, as that called the Water Salamander, is destitute of the male Organ, that can convey any thing into the Uterus of the Female, and when there is an Emission of the Semen, it seems not at all to reach the Female, which nevertheless partakes of its Virtue, so as to conceive thereby; and consequently the first Rudiments of Life in the Fœtus, just beginning to kindle into a new Kind of Being, must be of the spirituous and refined Sort. The human Semen is commonly known to abound with Animalcula. No doubt these may be of great Use towards the Propagation of Life in the Embryo, as that which contains Life and Motion may be the most ready Means of helping to confer Life and Motion to another.

But, according to the Notion of the opposite Reasoners, concerning the Nature of Spirit the Brutes themselves, as they are endowed with Thought, though in a much lower Degree and Perception, which we see they are, and what perceives, is and must be, according to them, a Spirit; these must have a new Creation of their spiritual Part also, when they enter upon the animal Rank and Species: for they cannot allow any Way of producing a new spiritual Substance, but by Creation. But we do
not

not find they like to acknowledge this necessary Consequence, in relation to the Brute Animals, though it extends undeniably, not only to those, but to all the most diminutive Insects, that take place in the Creation, and have the Gift of Perception, though in the most obscure and imperfect Degree.

In the mean Time, who is so void of Sense and Observation, as not to allow the seminal Principle in the Animal, and also in the vegetable Creation, is a Master-piece of Nature, and that the Workmanship is divinely and amazingly excellent, whose Energy and Power can, out of such small, and, in appearance, weak Elements raise up, and daily renew such inconceivable Numbers of Creatures so various in their Ranks, and so uniform in every Species.

I cannot acquiesce in what a modern ^P Author has advanced, concerning the human Soul, that it might be infused by the Creator into the Semen whilst yet resting in the Male; because, at that Rate, there must be innumerable more Souls, created by a particular divine Designation and Agency, than ever were actually produced to Life, so much as in the Embryo, for want of the ordinary Means of Generation; and the all-wise Creator of all Things must be continually employed to no Purpose, seeing great Part of his handy Work must soon perish and come to nothing. But if these Principles are supposed to be produced by the Fœ-

cundity of Nature, with which the Lord of Nature has enriched it, by a Power implanted in the Human Kind originally, as well as the Animals of inferior Order, then the Concern about the Loss of so many Beings is over and at an End; though, if they had reached Maturity, they had arrived to the Use of human Understanding, or to the Perfection of the Species they belonged to: because they received no new Creation, but were the pure Effect of pre-established Laws of Nature, that prevail thro' all her Works; where the great Origin and Cause of all things has poured the Riches of his Bounty so far, as that it shall rather exceed, than fall short of its requisite Intentions; in order the more securely to propagate a perpetuity of Animal, and of the human Race particularly, to partake of the Benefit of Creation. I would not be understood to mean, that there would be any Difficulty in the divine Being, to be thus creating daily; but the Inconsistency of imagining, that he will be so employed, very often to no manner of Purpose, is the Thing I would have considered, and the Thing I object to.

As to adulterous or incestuous Births, the Supposition of the immediate actual Concurrence, and Under-agency of the Deity thereto, in so particular a Manner, as that of a new Creation: I take this to be a very different Case from the Belief of human Nature, being left to its own Productions in its usual Course;

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as different as it would be, in this latter Supposition, to see or know of the Wickedness of abandoned Rakes with Displeasure, from actually joining with them in their wicked Ways, or confirming by my Authority, as far as I can, what they have been infamously perpetrating in the former Case. God Almighty, by all moral Heathens, as well as Christians, is understood, from the Rectitude of his Nature, infinitely remote from all Turpitude of any Sort; though he does not work Miracles to put an immediate Check to the Career of wicked Men: that would be to overthrow the wise Establishments of Nature, which are the Works of his own Hands; and likewise to overturn the Foundation and Distinction of Virtue and Vice; these depending altogether upon the Freedom of human Choice.

I think it very difficult, or rather impossible, to reconcile the Displeasure of the divine Nature, with the Immorality of Men, if we go upon the Schemes and Imaginations of those Men, that make the immediate Concurrence of the Divinity quite necessary to the Commission of all human Actions, and particularly sinful Actions; and that to such a Degree too, as necessitates the Commission of them, the Will and Inclination being before hand betrayed into this fatal Necessity of Sinning. I therefore do not scruple to put this down amongst the most wicked, as well as the most absurd Errors that ever happened to Men pretending

to Knowledge, or Sense of Justice, or common Understanding ; the Contrariety of the divine Purity to every thing immoral, as I said, will not suffer us to entertain the least Suspicion of his favouring, much less of effectually co-operating in any thing of that kind.

The *Supralapsarians* drew a terrible glaring Portrait of the Deity, who affirmed, he concurred in the Entity, but not in the Obliquity of the Act, as being himself above all Laws, when he necessitates poor Creatures to the willing and acting of those Crimes, which were likewise doomed, at the same Time, for their endless Punishment and Misery. The Author abovementioned likewise distinguishes the Materiality of an Act, from the Immorality : which Term, Materiality, I wonder the Patron of Immateriality should make use of.

The Author of the ideal¹ World did undertake to demonstrate with utmost Certainty, that the Soul and Body are, in all respects, so diametrically opposite, that it is utterly impossible one should in the least affect the other, by any Ties they can receive ; and that it is God alone, that actually interposes at all these Times, that any Sensation arises in us, and by his immediate Agency conveys it to our Minds, which we fondly, and in great Ignorance, imagine comes directly from the Body. As likewise, when we will to go to any Place ; 'tis he that moves the Body, and the Soul has

¹ Mr. Norris.

no Share in it. I confess, I think his Arguments are very cogent, upon the Supposition of such Matter only, as is contended for by him, and our learned Metaphysicians ; nor is it possible for them that maintain their Theory, to get over them ; but am very far from coming into them, as he must apparently argue from wrong Principles and mistaken Ideas, both of Matter and Spirit, or at least of Matter, because of the Absurdity that at first Sight must occur, upon Supposition of a Body created, and furnished with vast Variety of exquisitely curious Organs, to no useful or real Purpose ; besides the Impiety of making infinite Goodness the Author of Sin, wherever the Body is concerned, which is in every Action, and indeed every Case in all the Wickedness committed by the Sons of Men. If we should be mindful not to run into Difficulties, we should be more so, when warm in the Pursuit of our Demonstrations, with the natural Concern of an Author fond of the Issue of his own Brain ; that we do not, instead of getting rid of Obscurities, run into palpable Absurdities of the worst kind. A Mind and a Clod, as a judicious ^m Writer too calls them, when upon the Subject of Soul and Body, are as different Terms, and convey as distant Ideas, and as unlike each other, as any we can instance in, nor seem to have the least Relation or Agreement ; and when we are disposed to shew our Rhe-

^m Mr. Horv.

toric,

toric, and declaim on these Subjects, such a lively Contrast may serve very well to excite Surprize and Wonder in our Readers; but when we speak seriously, whether we allow the Soul to be strictly immaterial or not, we must fairly acknowledge, we daily see a natural Dependance between them in fact, as unlikely as ever they may be in Idea, by strict, though imperceptible Ties, so long as the Organs are preserved in a Condition to perform their Offices: and if we were permitted to view the curious Frame, we should find, they must as certainly act upon one another before hand, as when put upon the Trial, we find they do; as that the several Wheels of a Watch, by being exactly fitted together, will with a proper Spring turn each other in a regular conspiring Motion. We may discourse as dogmatically as we please, and very gravely assign to Matter, a poor Property or two, according to our Inclination and Humour, to favour some beloved Scheme; and fancy we have been very liberal, when we have made Shift to furnish it out with such important Requisites, as a solid extended Bulk; and if we mean that all Matter in general, as far as our Recollection will reach, agrees in these common Properties, we easily allow it: but then to conclude from thence, that there is actually existing any one Portion of Matter, that has no other Attributes or Qualities belonging to it; this is, as I said, contrary to every body's Experience, and there is not a

Lump we see or handle, but has Multitudes of them of various Kinds contained in it. What then may the most orderly and copious System of the Universe contain?

Boerhaave tells us, that Heat has one general Quality belonging to it, and that is, to extend the Bulk of all Matter, wherever it prevails to a considerable Degree: but should any body from thence conclude, that this is the sole Effect of it, he might soon be convinced of his Absurdity, when he may every Day see, that the different Degrees of it only can bind and fix, or else melt and dissolve, give Life or take it away, bring on Pleasure, or Pain and Torment. Innumerable such Instances may be given, and with as little Reason will they argue, who, because all Matter, in the general Idea we have of it, concurs, as far as we can collect them, but in two or three Particulars, will have it, that no distinct Part of it, when you come to analyze, or any way examine it, has any thing more belonging to its Composition.

On the other Hand, if there be a Substance within us entirely alien from every thing that enters into the Composition of Matter, that is the only useful Principle in all our Actions, as well as Thoughts; and the finest ætherial Particles united in the best connected System imaginable can supply no more than the opposite Gentlemen admit of; then they will be so far from being serviceable in the human Frame, that they must be a Burthen and Clog to the inhabit-

inhabiting Mind, which would act freer and better without this bodily Incumbrance; and indeed, this Consequence is so clear and unavoidable, that this has been represented by Divines, discoursing on this Subject, as the very Case: Though at the same Time the Completion of Happiness is, I think, reserved by all Christians to the Re-union of Soul and Body at the general Resurrection. Who can forbear asking, how we are to reconcile such evident Contradictions? If it be said, in answer to this, that the Bodies of good Men will be then glorified, and as they shall then participate of a more illustrious State, they will be more suitable Companions for the higher Part, and be rendered capable of vastly superior Enjoyments, as having the greatest Endowments to qualify them for these Attainments. If this be the Case, give me Leave to ask, how Matter, that has nothing but what these Men allow it, has a Power to arrive at these Qualifications? Can Extension and Solidity, when put in Motion, or divided into ever so fine Parts, and brightened up into ever so shining a Mass; can these, without any other Advantages, contribute in the least to the Happiness of a spiritual and immortal Soul? These are professedly, with them, all the Properties that belong to Matter as such, and constitute that Body we call Material; and therefore the Gentlemen we have to do with, must strangely forget themselves, when they talk in such contrary Strains upon Matter. I
would

would seriously recommend it to every one's Consideration, whether these Doctrines, that disable Matter to this Degree, can be consistent with Revelation itself? And then as to our Condition in this Life, with these Bodies and Souls, were these noble immaterial Spirits given us, only to drudge for the manifold Wants and Necessities, the frail Flesh is Heir to? Or was the Body given to be a Perverter of the better Part? to hinder and prevent us from the Knowledge and Obedience of our Creator, and to load us with innumerable Clogs, and beset us with Temptations, to which, from the Concatenation and mutual Alliance of one with the other, we are, as it were, sentenced and condemned, and without which material Part, we could be no way liable or obnoxious to? Certainly this was never the Intention of the most beneficent Creator.

Besides, it is impossible, according to this Doctrine, to know whether there be any such thing, as what we call Matter, in Nature. This spiritual and most active Principle of Thought may, for any thing we can prove to the contrary, be fertile in a thousand Ideas arising from this Mind, without any possible Subserviency of Matter in our Frame, to regulate these Ideas, or even admit their Objects, by the Help of our Senses. So these Ideas may have nothing real to excite them, but are only struck out of our wanton Imaginations; and to give this arguing the better Strength and Colour, we find

find there are Varieties enough of these, that under some Circumstances have no other Foundation ; as in Dreams, and in melancholy and maniacal Cases, and Fevers. And to encourage us the better to these wise Conclusions, we may be sure to gain one considerable Point, for which the learned World have puzzled themselves, and taken immense Pains to no purpose, seeing all the insuperable Difficulties, as we apprehended them, are now at once solved and silenced ; there being no such Things, in reality, in being, and are no more than the Creatures of this busy Principle within us, that is always at work raising false Images in abundance, only to amuse and impose upon us. Thus we are in a fair Way to a ridiculous Scepticism, which those, that maintain the necessary Ministrations of the human Body to the Busyness of Life, will not be in much Danger of falling into ; as, I reckon, every body will bear me Witness.

What I have mentioned, as only a proper Subject of Ridicule, and represent here in that View only, is actually espoused, and very gravely too, by a Person of principal Note and great Merit, as well as by some others ; arguing, that there is possibly no such Thing, as what we call Matter in being, and that every Thing we take to be such, is only the Effect of Ideas in our Mind or Imagination. To such Talk as this I can only say, if the concurrent Testimony of our Senses, where this

can be had, which is frequently the Case ; and always so, if we please, when the Object is within our Reach ; if the Testimony of these, in Confirmation of each other, as well as in their particular Evidence, when we cannot use them jointly ; if these will not convince us, I shall think Arguments needless ; and if there be any such, that are quite serious, and believe as they say, I should think the Infatuation of such an extraordinary kind, as to be absolutely incurable : but, I think, we should suspend our Opinion of their Sincerity, till we see them act consistently. As for Instance, if they see an House or a Tree just falling on their Heads, and they sedately refuse to get out of Reach of the immediate Danger, or when we see a good Sum of Money offered them in just Payment, and they decline receiving it, as taking it to be only the Idea of Money arising in their Minds, and no such thing as Money in Reality, and consequently of no Use to them ; or if we see them refuse their ordinary Food, upon this Persuasion, that there is really no such thing as Food at all, but in the Imagination ; then we must give some Credit to their Sincerity; otherwise, we should reasonably desire to be excused. This, in the mean time, may be justly alledged, as I take it, as a notable Instance of the Effect of thinking and reasoning in the abstracted Way, that can make Men talk at this Rate of Enthusiasm and Absurdity ; or suffer others to give the least Attention to them.

If

If after all, there be any that think there may be any thing in such wild Suppositions, and are at all in earnest, I should ask what Account do these ideal Gentlemen give of our Saviour's Incarnation, and Sufferings, as well as Doctrines, and of his Resurrection? Will they say, these Things were all Chimeras and void of Foundation? This they must necessarily acknowledge upon their Principles; whereas these are the Earnest, especially the last, to all Christians, of no less than our Resurrection and future Happiness. They will not, I believe, openly affirm, there was no such Person in the World on the kind, and most interesting, and important Errand of Man's Redemption; nor will say, that the great Articles of our Faith were built on nothing but Visions. But I am weary of this, and desire to have done with it, and leave it not among the common Errors of Mankind, but among the rankest Absurdities, and indeed Blasphemies. But to return.

There is one Difficulty, besides what was taken Notice of before, arising from the Doctor's System, relating to the Soul of Brutes, that every body must see; and that is, If every thing that thinks and perceives, has an immaterial Soul, as the Soul of Man is, as he undertakes to demonstrate, in order to be capable of Thought, and as such is naturally and necessarily immortal: then it follows, that the Souls of Brutes, and, I may add, of the whole sensitive Creation too are so; for they think or perceive

in their Degree; and consequently these Gentlemen must conclude, that the Maker of them works a Miracle to annihilate them, when ever they depart from their Bodies; or else affirm, they remain in the immortal State they are entitled to. One of these Assertions must be true, necessarily; the Consequence is immediate, and it does not signify any thing to shuffle, or endeavour to evade or blind the Force of it, by saying, they leave such things to God Almighty's good Will and Pleasure; for so we must do every thing else: but here, such Expressions are only designed as a Put-off, by those that cannot escape, when urged with the Force of the Argument, though they are not willing to espouse either of the Alternates, or choose to maintain one or the other Side of the Question.

None of the Ancients pretended to a Demonstration of the Necessity, arising out of the Nature of the Soul, of this Claim to Immortality. So far from it, that the major Part, I am afraid, did not believe the Truth of it. It must at the same Time be acknowledged, they were more in want of such Proofs, as could not be doubted of or denied, than we in our happier Days, who enjoy the Benefit of a Revelation, that brings with it the Certainty of a future and endless State. I confess, I am tempted to believe most of the Patrons of this System have been led into it from a Religious Motive: but think the Fervour of their Zeal

Zeal herein may be spared, when we put it upon this Issue, That it is the Glory of the Christian Dispensation, to have brought Life and Immortality to Light by the Gospel.

That it was Mens evil Bias, their depraved Lusts and Affections, that blinded the contemplative Sages of old, we can scarce conceive; since many of them would have been sincerely glad of the Discovery, so as to have left no Room for gloomy Fears, or Hesitation about it.

We are more acquainted with the Outside of Matter, than we are with the inward Substance, and its secret Operations; and more ready to be led away by the Senses, than fatigue ourselves with stricter Enquiries, or reflect with exact Attention on what passes in our own Minds. The internal Frame of both lies deep, and though the Number of the inquisitive Part of Mankind, if reckoned up among themselves, is great, yet in Comparison of the rest, it is but small. These content themselves with taking things upon Trust, or else, finding them too abstruse, and uncertain to conclude upon any thing, never trouble themselves about them. Thus they suffer themselves to be easily imposed on, by the most forward and assuming. This is the general Case of Mankind, captivated, as they are, in the Bands of Sloth and Ignorance.

But what has misled that Part of our Species, that has been educated to Letters, till of late

Years, is the School Divinity, as it is called, that over-run all *Europe* with strained and unintelligible Notions, being unlucky Improvements of the old *Stagirite*, which have not yet been thoroughly banished from our metaphysical Learning. A Fondness of talking out of the common Way, and above the Vulgar, and perhaps too, at one time of Day, a real Design by their substantial Forms, their Quiddities and trifling Subtilties, and puzzling Distinctions, to raise a Dust about them, and prevent People's Enquiry into Truth itself: These I take to be the great Occasions of our late Definitions and Explication of things, and in particular those of Body and Spirit; which instead of striking Light into the Subjects of Dispute, have only served to obscure them the more. Reasoning, as Men of this kind of Learning have chosen to do, under abstracted Ideas of Things, that have no Existence in Nature, is more likely to confuse and mislead, than instruct the Enquirer. 'Tis only Particulars, that we are acquainted with, or indeed that do exist, and generally have no other Being, but in Particulars, unless in the Imagination, where they lie abstracted by its Assistance only from Individuals; and every one of these Individuals has so many Ingredients in its Composition, and so many concurrent Powers, Modes, Causes, and Effects, that it must argue great Vanity in Man to think to grasp them all with absolute Certainty, and to dictate all the Powers and

and Properties, that do or do not belong to any Part of the Creation.

Here it may be proper to mention an Argument of the Doctor's, that goes upon this Dilemma, That if Matter be the Subject of Thought, it must be one Particle that thinks, or more: if one, why have not others as good a Title to this Privilege? To which no Answer can be given. If there are more Particles that have a Power of thinking, then there must be more thinking Beings, and in the same Number, as there are different Particles; which we know is not so: therefore Matter does not think. Now as to this, we do not affirm, that bare Matter of itself thinks, especially the gross Parts of Matter we see in every rude Mass that occurs; but that when aptly fitted with a proper System of its finer Parts, it helps to regulate Thought in a Way inscrutable to us. If it is very plain to every one, that has made use of the thinking Faculty within him, that the Particles of Matter united in a suitable Frame, which is the Case of the human Body, do support Thought, when the Solids and Fluids, happily combined, lend their mutual Assistance; and the contrary appears where they are morbid, and the Brain is possessed by a Quantity of distempered Matter; or perhaps there may be a Defect and Deprimation of what is natural, by which Means, the Intellect is clouded, and rendered incapable of thinking: We may venture to pronounce, when we see such a curious

Machine

Machine thus employed and circumstanced, to what Purposes, as well for the Use of the Mind, as for bodily Service, it was constructed, and that nothing could be more foreign and absurd, than to speak of one Particle as the Subject of Thought; and indeed in itself it seems more consonant to Reason, that the thinking Principle should be communicated to an elegant System, for as much as the Particles of Matter do intimately communicate, and conspire together in latent Ties, through all the Works of Nature, for every necessary Use in Life, by virtue of an innate Power that is rooted in them by the Hands of the all-wise and all-bountiful Creator. But this is the Way of arguing I find so much Fault with, of raising Conclusions from abstracted Ideas of Matter in general, and two or three trifling Properties belonging to it, and not reasoning from the State of things, as we see and experience them actually existing in Nature, with all their Properties attending them, as their inseparable Retinue.

But that I may not be thought a Puller-down only, and to build up nothing in its Stead, I shall endeavour in a few Words, to make some Enquiry, and very imperfectly I am sensible, into the Nature of the human Soul, and likewise Body, as they respect each other; and afterwards, give the best Arguments I can produce for its Immortality. If we are Friends, and Lovers of Truth, more than of any Tenets,

nets, or Ways of making it appear to the World, we shall not be willing to admit of such Proofs, though ever so refined or popular, as to an impartial Mind may be feared to be destitute of a solid Foundation. I could wish those, that have been usually brought for the Immateriality in the highest and most abstracted Sense, and the Necessity of its Immortality consequent thereupon, were entirely free from any Suspicion of this kind, and as stable and demonstrable, as we are told they are ; and am very desirous to leave it to every one, that has a mind to make an impartial Enquiry, to weigh and deliberate upon these Things, and judge upon the Whole, as shall seem right and most conclusive.

The Soul of Man, for aught I can make appear, may be a Spirit in the strictest Sense, that is, free from any Mixture of Matter, any other way, than by some secret Ties. It seems to us, to be a Being of a spiritual Kind ; we find it far from having in it any of the Properties of Matter we are acquainted with, and it is altogether invisible : It has Principles in its Nature and Operations, that we do not find Matter, though ever so much refined by human Art or Thought, in any Condition to partake of : we likewise find it intimately joined with a material Substance, wrought up into a most delicate System, adapted to its Use and Service upon all Occasions ; and where our most curious and ultimate Enquiries cease and come

come short, there is still no doubt a more curious Piece of Workmanship behind, and out of Sight. This seems to be carried on principally in the Fluids. As I take it, the Solids are in a manner incapable of such Regulations and Attenuations, as must be necessary to such a Design, and are apparently formed for another End ; that is, for containing and transmitting these Fluids. These are fitting up by innumerable Secretions, not only for the Nutrition and renewing of the heavy bodily Parts, but likewise to prepare it for an Alliance with that which is much higher. The Springs and Chains that unite them, are, as I said, hid deep from us ; only we find by Experience, and are satisfied how strict these are, and must own, there is something in the Nature of Matter unknown, and very surprizing, that can be brought to that Perfection in our Frame, as to occasion this Connection, and arrive at a Fitness to be a Co-partner with the Mind, in all its Operations. We must acknowledge also, that the Juices that circulate in the almost infinitely fine Vessels, are not only attenuated there, though that be a necessary Requisite, we find; but that they receive some much greater Change, to fit them for the Use of the Mind, or thinking Part: of which a Word in the Close.

The most refined of those Parts, that are thus wrought up in the Brain, to be the immediate Companions of the Mind and Memory, should seem to be of no flitting kind, but

but to have a Permanency of Being, and Residence there. Else, how can we think, they can assist in retaining a Remembrance of things past, as in a Treasure-House; if these fine Parts are not principally, at least, the same that received the Impression of things done before? How can new succeeding ones retain an Impression that they never had? That these Signatures and Impressions are necessarily to be fix'd, and remain ready for Use, seems to appear likewise from this; because by means of a Palsey, obscuring the Communication of the Mind, with its impressed Characters, these are partly, or totally lost; which surely could not be the Case, if these Particles had not their Use before, in retaining the past Ideas, by the Help of these Prints upon them, and which we might find yet remaining, were the Organs unobstructed in their Offices; as it sometimes happens, when the Disorder is once removed that obscured them before.

This kind of Argument, makes the Opinion of *stamina vitæ* probable. There have been some very pious, and, as they were esteemed, orthodox Divines, who upon mature Considerations have concluded, that there are such *Stamina* of a material Kind, that adhere to the Soul at the Time of its Departure out of the Body, and continue in their Union with it in its separate State, and prove an useful and necessary Vehicle, and a System the better to preserve and fit it for the Condition of that State,

till the re-uniting of Soul and Body, at the general Resurrection. The Probability of their Existence and Use in this Life strengthens the Argument to the same Purposes for the Life to come, and at the same Time receives Strength from it.

As to the Inclinations and Aversions, and what we call the Passions, these appear not only to be seated in the Head, and to discover themselves principally in the Eye, when they are any thing violent; but they likewise take Possession of the Heart, if not some other Viscera, and range through the Mass of Blood in its Rounds, which is commonly hastened thereby, if not too great; kindling sometimes, and in some Constitutions frequently, as it were, into a Flame. Now, if what was said be true, that there are no Conveyances in the Body, that can give an immediate Communication up to the Head, or derive it in like manner from thence; then it follows, that the Soul does not reside in one Point, or small Part only, but is extended to several Parts of the Body, and possesses them, and is present with them at the same Time. The Soul is then an extended Being, as well as Matter. The same appears from what was said of the Soul mixing with the Blood in all its Circuits, in the case of Feeling. If metaphysical Proofs make it not an extended Being, and Matter of Fact seems pretty plainly to prove it is; I shall leave it to any one to judge, which Side of the Question to choose.

choose. How the Patrons of these Opinions come to allow the Deity, which is a spiritual Being, to be present to every Part of the Creation, in which no Doubt they are right, as well as to all the Immensity of Space, that is, to have infinite Extension; and at the same Time, not to admit the Soul to have the least Degree of it; I am at a Loss to account for : but that this is the Case with them, appears, because when speaking of the Creation, they make Extension one of the principal Characters of Matter, and some, we know, have made it the same with Matter.

They sometimes kindly hint, that their Notions are so sublime and abstracted, as to be quite above the ordinary Methods of reasoning ; and that Persons must be endowed with great Capacities, and a Genius above the common Level of Mankind, to comprehend them rightly. Now, I own myself so unhappy, as to be among the lower Rank of Reasoners, and pretend to nothing of a higher Nature in the least ; and therefore, should not presume to pass a critical Judgment upon these Matters. I only beg Leave to offer one Consideration to my Superiors, which is this, That Arguments, or Demonstrations if you please, that can be understood by a few only, were never designed to convince many, unless we are to give an implicit Faith to the few ; which, I own, I am not fond of at all, finding it more agreeable to my Inclination, to reason and judge for myself

self as well as I can, and upon the best Proofs I am able to make out: Though they should happen to be of the lower Kind, they may suit my narrow Views and Capacity better, and possibly be more to my Satisfaction. These Gentlemen, indeed, can soar so high at Pleasure, as to be able to solve any Questions we can ask them, concerning the divine Nature and Perfections, and readily affirm, or deny any Proposition whatsoever relating thereto; and to so great a Penetration are they arrived, as never to be at a Loss in any thing, though upon no less than an infinite Subject. At the same Time, the Scripture says, *who by searching can find out God, who can find out the Almighty to Perfection? Higher than Heaven, what can we know? Deeper than Hell, &c. and that Clouds and Darkness are round about him.* We need not wonder then, that they can demonstrate every thing, with so much Perspicuity and Certainty, that belongs to the human Soul; a Being no less than infinitely inferior. However, as I cannot flatter myself with any Expectation of reaching such Heights, I am apt to imagine, it may be the Case of some others of my fellow Creatures; especially as, I am told, we are of the more numerous Clasps. I shall therefore try, whether I can strike a little Light into the Subject of the Soul's Title to Immortality, by Arguments more familiar to our Understandings.

I am ready to think, an Argument may be deduced from its Original, that may entitle it to

to the Expectation of this high Privilege; when we take along with us, at the same Time, the Consideration of this divine Image, the human Mind, that is stampt so fair, and strengthened and enriched with so high Attainments, and Resemblance of the Creator, as to make it, in another kind of Eminence, than the rest of the visible Creation, a Partaker of the divine Nature.

The Creation, as I understand it, of Man was not immediately out of nothing, as it is generally now a-days taken to be; nor indeed of the rest of the Universe, which have received the Benefit of it; but were made out of Emanations, very possibly of different Kinds and Degrees, that flowed from the divine Essence. This seems necessary to be the Case, seeing that which is Nothing, or hath no Being at all, cannot well be imagined to be capable of being any way acted upon.

That I may not be suspected, however, to say this of my own Head, I must observe, there was no Doctrine more generally received by the Ancients, than that the Creation is originally an Emanation from the Deity, as the Fountain. This weⁿ understand is the Meaning of the *Sephiroth* and the *Aziluth* among the *Cabalists*; in this the *Seres*, *Brachmans*, the *Magi*, and all the Learning of *Ægypt* and *Asia* concurred, all believing, that out of Nothing, Nothing could arise to Being. Now as

ⁿ See Burnet's *Archæol. Philosophica.*

there are different Orders of superior Rank to any in our Lot of the Creation, as we learn from Sacred History especially, it will appear credible, that there were different Kinds of Emanations; some of which were nearer the Great Original, and others more depreſſ'd in their Natures, just as it seemed best to the divine Wisdom, and most suitable to the various Ends of Creation. If those above us have Vehicles proper to fix them in their Species, and supply their Occasions, they must be, no Doubt, of a more elevated and glorious Kind. The Emanations from whence we of the human Race deduced our Beings, seem to be of a middle Kind pretty nearly, betwixt those of Angels in the higher Regions and of a more exalted Station, and the Brute and Reptile Creation we see so far below us. Yet the Consideration of ourselves in our Nature as accountable Beings, sets us nearer the Spirits above in Dignity, than our partaking of gross Matter in our Make, brings us towards the Level of the brute Beast that perishes.

For it seems highly conclusive, that Man, from Obligations arising out of his reasoning Powers, and Knowledge of Good and Evil, should be a Candidate for future Remunerations. We see how plentifully he partakes of the bright Emanations of the Deity in his Faculties and Principles of Being; and he appears naturally configned to Immortality, by being so well qualified for it.

If it be said, This Account of Emanations will, from its divine Derivation, though not from any Qualities inherent, set Matter upon the Footing of a continual Duration ; I shall not dispute the Point. The Scriptures themselves have determined, that, after the general Conflagration, there shall a new Heaven and new Earth arise from this of ours, for the Use of better deserving Inhabitants, than the present Possessors, under which this injured Creation groans, and is burdened.

If it be objected, according to this rate of Reasoning, the Brutes likewise must have their Share of Immortality, I think that not necessarily conclusive, as to their Perception ; because in their System, they have but a slender Part of this higher Communication, and their Natures and Capacities seem quite of another Species, as wholly different from ours, in their Apprehension of Things, as in their bodily Make and Appearance ; their Abilities only availing to a Sagacity of searching after their Food, or an Inclination to propagate their Kind, or feed their Young, and some low Offices, some of them are capable of, for the Service and Pleasure of Man, not at all conceiving any thing higher. We never can possibly possess them with the least Notion of a presiding Deity, or any thing that has the most remote Pretence to the Character of a moral Obligation, or any Apprehension of a Futurity. And as they want these natural Qualifications or Capacities, which alone

alone can fit them for a State of Retribution; so 'tis, most probable they want with them the Principles of Immortality too. They have nothing comparable to the Number, Strength, and Capaciousness of those Faculties, that furnish out and regulate the Powers of the human Mind. And he that can imagine, that the Souls of Brutes, or what you please to call them, can subsist and act in a State of Separation, as well as those of our Rank, may as easily conclude, that a Bird with two or three Feathers, and upon one Pinion only, can soar as high as one that hath both Wings equipt, with all its delicate and useful Plumage. Their Substance, I confess, after they are mouldered to Earth, will continue mixed with the rest of the material World remaining, and lie there undistinguished from the common Mafs.

If it be said, That nothing but pure Spirit in the Sense contended for, is capable of having in itself a natural Foundation of Immortality; and that this is necessarily so, as having no compounding Parts, nor consequently any Principles of Decay or Dissolution: I take this to be much easier affirmed than proved. We have, in Reality, very little Notion of the Mind, more than of a thinking Something; for take away actual Thought, or Perception from it, which is often the Case, as in Sleep, Apoplexies, &c. and then, pray, what is our Idea of this Spirit at such Times? Why truly, no other, as I apprehend it, than of a Something, without

without so much as an Accident, unless negative Ones, actually subsisting; only having a Power, when bodily Obstructions are removed, to recover the thinking Faculty. We have always an Idea of something or other belonging to Matter whenever we meet with it, as Brightnes, Coldnes, Dynes, its Figure, or Motion, with a great many more. But none, that I know of, belonging to the human Mind when under a Suspence of Thought. I do not say the Soul has nothing more in it at those Times; but only that we have no Ideas then of what it contains as pure Spirit. How can we undertake then to affirm or deny so many Things concerning it, as these Gentlemen we speak of do, when we have no Grounds, or no better than their imaginary ones, to go upon?

'Tis only by Experience, and Reflection on our Experience, that we come to know any Thing of our own Minds; of their various Turnings and Windings, as they are pleased or displeased, awed, or otherwise engaged by Things past, present, or future, and of the Resolutions we take up or lay aside, consequent thereupon. As to any prior Knowledge of it, we have none; but are entirely in the Dark in that Respect. We must abide then by our Experience of what we find pass within ourselves; and if upon taking a View of our thinking Part in all its Operations, we find in all these it is constantly joined and

mix'd with the bodily Frame; and that not only when informed and entertained by the Senses, but likewise in the most retired Contemplations; nor can any of these take Place, as has been before shewn, unless the bodily System be in a Condition to act with it, and assist it in its Offices: How can these Gentlemen so assuredly lay it down for a Rule, That this Mind of ours is entirely simple and uncompounded; when Experience, the grand Test, shews us, that every Action of it is from a mix'd Principle and Source? As the Quickness of our Sensations and Sallies of our Passions proved it to be extended before, or in more Places than one at the same Time, so now, and from what has been said before, if it appears that Body and Mind act conjunctly in every Thing wherein the Mind as well as the Body is employed, these must be acknowledged to be two bad Proofs of the Soul's absolute Immateriality.

I do not at the same Time take upon me to affirm that this Ray of the Divinity, if I may be permitted to use a Metaphor, the Mind or Soul, has nothing of pure Spirit in it. I should then be guilty of the same Fault I am cautioning against, of saying Things without Proof: My Busines is to shew that the Arguments usually adduced, to prove directly this Spirituality or Immateriality of the Mind, are insufficient. Because in every Thing we can do, or indeed think of, an orderly Dispo-

Disposition of the finer Parts of our material Frame, we find, is necessary to enable the Mind to discharge its natural Functions.

But tho' I am not willing to rest the Proof of the Soul's Immortality upon its simple or uncompounded Nature, by reason of our Ignorance of the Subject ; I am very desirous to reassume the Argument of the Fitness of it for eternal Rewards and Punishments. This thinking Being is not only capable of taking into Consideration the Affairs of this Life, of seeing their Advantages and pursuing them ; but 'tis as capable of carrying its Views to Things of infinitely more Weight and Consequence, of extending its Fears and Hopes to the different States of endless Duration. That these pleasing Hopes and chilling Fears are natural to us, every one must be sensible. Nor is any one so stupid as to get entirely free from them, tho' never so much sunk into sensual Pleasures, or allured by their flattering Embraces ; or though Men have ever so much endeavoured to stifle the Dictates of Conscience by a continual Violence or Sottishness. On the other hand, the conscious Remembrance of good Actions is always attended with a Complacency of Mind ; not only from the Sense of having done our Duty, and approv'd ourselves useful Members of Society, but from the rising Apprehensions likewise of the Divine Approbation : when all Wickedness leaves a Guilt and Gloominess

on the Mind, and a secret Dread it cannot shake off of a severe Retribution. Now if there be no such State, no suitable Rewards, no condign Punishments, why were these Apprehensions printed so strongly on the Minds of Mankind? Was it only to delude us, and to impose upon our natural Weakness and Credulity? It is horrid to imagine, it is execrable to speak, thus of our munificent Creator, who could never awe us with these false Terrors, or allure us with these vain Expectations, for the Sake of keeping the World a little in Order. He could, no doubt, find other Means to secure the Purposes of this present Life, as for Instance, by lowering the Capacities and cooling the Passions, and so putting us in a properer Condition to act our Part on the Stage of this World only; and, we know, no generous Mind even of our own Rank and Species, nor one of common Probity, would ever endure such a Fallacy to be imposed on his Fellow-Creatures by any indirect Means whatsoever.

Besides, we know very well that we deserve Punishments, when we do amiss, and that good and bad Actions ought to be distinguished by proper Retributions; and how will this be done effectually, if not in a future State of Existence?

But further: Now there is an express Revelation handed down to us, supported, as to its Truth, upon Arguments that none can refel,

fel, and many good People, upon the best grounded Reasons, as far as they are able to judge, not only believe, but with their utmost Diligence, agreeably to the weighty Concern, make it their principal Study and Business to live up to the Rules and Precepts thereof ; discharging all the Duties of a Christian Life with the utmost Fidelity, out of a Zeal for the Honour of God ~~as well as a firm Persuasion~~ Virtue and lively Hope of the promised Happiness : S 10/11 A 9
 To think a Being bountiful and good as we daily find him ; and infinitely remote from all Possibility of using his Creatures ill, as being under no Temptation of any kind to deceive ; that he should fail in his Candour and Faithfulness to the truly Good, in whom he hath encouraged this pious Confidence ; this is to have a much worse Opinion of the Deity, than we usually entertain of one another, with all our Faults and Depravity about us.

Far be it therefore from the great and just Judge of the whole Earth, that the Righteous should be as the Wicked ; which must be the Case if there be no Life after this. And as the Body has been a Sharer with the Mind in the Course of a well-spent Life, it seems very proper that it should be so in the Rewards, especially as it may be an useful and happy Concomitant in both. S 11/12 A 9

This Reasoning, and upon the Principles I have gone upon, cannot fail to lead us into a View

View of the Necessity and Advantage of the Resurrection of the Body, the great distinguishing Article of the Christian Faith ; and indeed this is the very Time the Scriptures and all Expositors have pitched upon, though some of them upon very dissonant Notions, for the Completion of Happiness to the Good and Obedient. The Case is so far from the Body's being a Clog to the Soul, even in its refined and glorified State, that it will be its best Friend and Coadjutor, to strengthen its Faculties, collect all its inmost Powers, and make it thoroughly fit and meet to be a Partaker of the Glory that shall be revealed. That Way of discoursing on the Body, that makes it a Weight, a dark Prison and Confinement, to hinder the Mind from soaring in Contemplation to the great Author of our Being and all heavenly Objects ; is so far from agreeing with, that it is quite repugnant to, the Doctrine of the Resurrection of the Body.

Its Patrons therefore, to give a consistent Account, must unsay what they have said ; for if Matter have in it no more than what comes up to their Standard, and, when disposed of in any imaginable Way, can have nothing to do with Thinking ; and if the Bodies that are to be raised are Matter, as every one supposes they are, then these can bear no Part in the Happiness of the World to come, as being under no Capacity of having any Relation to Thought ; and consequently, there is not, according

cording to this Philosophy the least Use of them to be admitted at the general Resurrection; therefore this Account cannot be true, if that of the Resurrection be so; for no one will imagine that they will be raised again and joined with the Soul to no manner of Purpose. On the contrary, the Account here given of a bodily System united with the Mind, as useful to the Affairs of this Life, and most conducive to the Happiness of the next; points out and conspires with the Doctrine of the Resurrection, and makes it necessary to the Consummation of that Bliss that shall immediately accrue, upon this happy and glorious Union. This likewise is far from having any Difficulties attending it, that I know, or can possibly think of; and is therefore, I am ready to conclude, true and satisfactory; and cannot forbear giving into a full Assurance, that when these Bodies shall be raised again, and infinitely refined, and this System exalted and established in its true Zenith of Elevation, that the Happiness arising from these ravishing Circumstances must be transcendent.

I don't make use of this Argument as if I v. Vol.
reached. reckoned this Article now wanted Proofs; which cannot be the Case, so fully taught in Scripture as it is, and so happily recommended by a most excellent Author of late. When Revelation receives Helps from such Hands as this Gentleman, and his Friend that wrote upon the Conversion of St. Paul, it is happy

for the thinking and reasoning Part of Mankind, as well as for the Cause of Religion itself.

I shall only say as to the Resurrection ; that the Apostles should run the certain Risque of their Lives without any Views of Advantage in this World or the other, to support a Cheat and an idle Fancy, as the *Athenians* and, I may say, all the World esteemed it, when first begun to be preached ; is not likely, but contrary to all Rules of human Prudence and Policy : For, according to the State of Learning, and, I may say, of common Apprehension at that Time of Day, this Assertion of dead Bodies rising to Life again, was thought a Piece of News just fit to be laughed at. The vain Philosophy then prevailing, only served to puzzle and give an unnatural Turn to Mens Minds, and lead them out of the Road of rational Enquiries. And indeed it must be something miraculous, that could get this Doctrine Admission into the Hearts of any even of the most Unprejudiced ; and cause it to triumph over all the Aversions with which Mankind were embittered. Though, in the Light I have here endeavoured to introduce it, this very Discovery of a Resurrection to come, seems most agreeable to sound Reason, and, like the whole System of Christianity, to be the *Wisdom of God*, as well as the *Power of God*.

As

As to the present State of Things in this Life: to look back a little, may we not, from this ancient Tradition of Emanations, strike a little Light into the Subject we have been considering; and give a Reason why dividing and comminuting our Blood and Fluids, as it is done and brought about by constant Circulations, into the most indefinitely fine Particles, makes them fit for the Reception and Embraces of the Mind? which seems to be because they are thereby brought nearer their Fountain and Original; which is no other than these Divine Emanations. From which, as we are taught by good Authority to believe, the whole World of Beings, not excepting gross Matter itself, are derived; which Matter was brought down into this compressed Mass, in order the better to fit it for the wise Ends and Purposes of the great Creator, and Former of all Things.

F I N I S.



